

**MINUTES OF THE
PROFICIENCY TESTING COMMITTEE MEETING
APRIL 23, 2002**

The Proficiency Testing Committee of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met by teleconference on Tuesday, April 23, 2002, at 1:00 p.m., Eastern Daylight Time (EDT). The meeting was led by Chair Ms. Barbara Burmeister of the Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene. The Agenda is given in Attachment A. A list of Action Items is given in Attachment B and the List of Participants is given in Attachment C. *The purpose of the meeting was to address items of importance identified in the meeting agenda.*

INTRODUCTION

The teleconference commenced with Ms. Burmeister taking roll call and reviewing the Agenda.

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

Minutes and Action Item Review

Minutes from the teleconference of April 9, 2002, were reviewed and accepted as written. The action items were reviewed and the status is shown in Attachment B.

Finalize Nominations of One Voting Member and One Contributing Member

Nominations must be submitted to Ms. Silky Labie by May 1st, 2002. The committee held a discussion and finalized the people that they would like to recommend for nomination. Ms. Burmeister will first verify with Dr. John Griggs and Dr. Tom McAninch if they agree with the committee selections for nomination and then send the following recommended committee members to the Board of Directors for approval. The voting member will be Ms. Sharon Dahl from the Minnesota Department of Health and the contributing member will be Dr. Jim Pletl from the Hampton Roads Sanitation District in Virginia Beach, VA. Ms. Dahl will bring input to the committee from a non-NELAP state and Dr. Pletl will bring input from the small municipal laboratory community and he also has expertise in the whole effluent toxicity area.

Quick Response PT Workgroup Report

Results of the PT Provider Survey

Dr. Anand Mudambi presented the results of the PT provider survey. Highlights included:

- Providers are currently offering make-up PT studies to labs in non-NELAC states who's accrediting authorities accept them.
- Too many added requirements, e.g. stability testing of every make-up sample, would greatly increase costs, which will not be cost effective overall.

- Providers would not have a problem restricting web-based results to the laboratories who participated in the study.
- Providers would not have a problem tracking previous PT study samples to laboratories in the same lab network or company provided the laboratory furnishes their affiliation to the provider.

Proposed language changes to Section 2.7.3.1

The two main concerns from the work group was the stability of the make-up PT samples and the restriction of make-up PT samples not only to labs who had received them before but also to labs within the same lab network. Based on the survey results, Dr. Mudambi could justify adding language that the make-up PT samples have an expiration date on them. Regarding a lab's network affiliation, Ms. Burmeister proposed adding language that the laboratory shall be responsible for providing it's network information to the PT provider. This would be done for both makeup and routine PT studies.

Dr. Mudambi proposed drafting two FAQs for the following items: (1) electronic results not being available unless a participating lab has a password to gain access and (2) Accrediting Authorities have the final authority whether to accept or reject PT's samples analyzed and scored for demonstrated corrective action.

Dr. Mudambi will submit proposed language to address the above concerns and circulate for comment by the committee and work group members.

Radiochemistry FOT Subcommittee Report

Proposed language changes to Appendix G

Ms. Burmeister reported that Dr. John Griggs proposed posting the Radiochemistry Data Evaluation Procedure on the NELAC website. He and the subcommittee also proposed changes to Appendix G and would like to submit them for vote at NELAC 8. Overall, this will make Appendix G consistent with the Criteria document. The committee concurred with Dr. Griggs proposals.

Review Agenda for NELAC 8 Proficiency Testing Session

Ms. Burmeister reviewed the tentative schedule for the NELAC 8 conference to verify that topics had sufficient time for discussion and presentation. The agenda was agreed upon and the draft will be sent to Ms. Jeanne Hankins by the May 1, 2002 deadline.

Status of Revised Analyte and Method Code Lists

The Accrediting Authorities advised Dr. Obenauf that it would not be advantageous for the committee to combine two or more methods and make one combination method code. As an alternative, it would be better to list each method separately than assign a combination method code. Since codes are already established for the methods in question, making changes to those codes that have existing assignments will result in changing the historical data. In terms of having combination methods listed, Dr. Obenauf suggested that both methods be listed separated by punctuation. Dr. Obenauf suggested to the committee that they should not segregate specific manufacturer (e.g. Lachat, Hach) codes, but rather use the miscellaneous group for those items. It was agreed upon that in terms of the manufacturer methods (required by the Accrediting Authorities) it is permissible

to assign them a number, but will not separate them out into their own area. In terms of the combination methods, Dr. Obenauf suggested to give each combination method a unique number since there aren't many of them. Ms. RaeAnn Haynes will discuss these topics in her next Accrediting Authorities teleconference and bring feedback to the committee.

Status of Technology Codes

Ms. Burmeister deferred discussion of this item until the next scheduled teleconference due to Dr. McAnich's absence.

Status of FOT Acceptance Criteria Subcommittee

Ms. Haynes reported that she has developed an agenda and will schedule the first teleconference of the FOT Acceptance Criteria subcommittee meeting before May 14, 2002.

Appendix D – Ongoing Monitoring Criteria Subcommittee Report

Dr. Obenauf reported that a list of potential monitoring criteria is being developed which will be sent to the subcommittee for review and discussion. He will report the results to the Proficiency Testing Committee at the next teleconference.

Proposed Changes to Chapter 2 and Appendices

Ms. Burmeister reviewed proposed language changes with the committee and the results or action items are summarized below.

Section 2.3 – Effective Date of Standards for PT Providers

According to Section C.4.1, once changes are posted on the NELAC website, laboratories have one year to come into compliance. Ms. Burmeister proposed the addition to Section 2.3 that PT providers would have no more than 6 months to come into compliance once changes have been posted to the NELAC website. Ms. Burmeister will finalize the proposed language and submit to NELAC 8 for vote.

Section 2.5 – Analyzing QC Standards and PT Samples

The committee reviewed the revised language for Section 2.5 submitted by Ms. Burmeister. Minor changes were made to make the requirement more auditable. It was agreed to submit this section to NELAC 8 for vote.

Uniform Electronic Data Format for Accrediting Authorities

Dr. Mudambi has an existing electronic XML format that four laboratories are currently piloting. This format would be sufficient for the necessary PT data collection requested by the Accrediting Authorities. Dr. Mudambi will send out his version of a uniform electronic data format to Dr. Mike Miller and the committee. Dr. Miller will contact Mr. Richard Shiebley to add this item to the next NELAP AA group agenda.

EPA/NIST Items

None

Membership and Outreach Committee Update

Nothing to report

Comments/Questions Received/Other Items or Issues

None

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned as the allotted teleconference time expired.

NEXT MEETING

The next Proficiency Testing Committee teleconference is scheduled for May 14, 2002, at 1:00 p.m., EDT.

**AGENDA
PROFICIENCY TESTING COMMITTEE MEETING
APRIL 23, 2002**

1. Minutes and status of action items from April 9, 2002 teleconference
2. Finalize nomination of one voting and one contributing member
3. Quick response PT subcommittee report (Anand)
 - Results of PT provider survey
 - Proposed language changes to Section 2.7.3.1
4. Radiochemistry FOT subcommittee report (Barb for John)
 - Proposed language changes to Appendix G
5. Review agenda for NELAC 8 PT session (Barb)
6. Status of revised analyte and method code lists (Ralph)
7. Status of technology codes – feedback from Chapter 1 (Barb for Tom)
8. Status of FOT Acceptance criteria subcommittee (RaeAnn)
9. Appendix D – Ongoing monitoring criteria subcommittee report (Ralph)
10. Proposed changes to Chapter 2 and appendices (Barb)
 - Section 2.3 – Effective date of Standards for PT providers
 - Section 2.5 – Analyzing QC Standards and PT samples
11. Uniform electronic data format for accrediting authorities (Mike)
12. Comments/questions received
13. EPA/NIST items
14. Membership and Outreach Committee update
15. Other items or issues

**ACTION ITEMS
PROFICIENCY TESTING COMMITTEE MEETING
APRIL 23, 2002**

| Item No. | Date Proposed | Action | Date to be Completed |
|-----------------|----------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| 1. | 04/23/02 | E-Mail John and Tom regarding the members that the committee would like to recommend for nomination (Burmeister) | ASAP |
| 2. | 04/23/02 | Send proposed language for 2.7.3.1 to committee and draft FAQs (Mudambi) | ASAP |
| 3. | 04/23/02 | Submit all approved changes for Chapter 2 and appendices to Jeanne Hankins (Burmeister) | 05/01/02 |
| 4. | 04/23/02 | Present combination method code and manufacturer method code issue to NELAP AA group (Haynes) | 05/14/02 |
| 5. | 04/23/02 | Submit NELAC 8 PT session agenda to Jeanne Hankins (Burmeister) | 05/01/02 |
| 6. | 04/23/02 | Send out version of uniform electronic data format to Mike and the committee (Mudambi) | ASAP |
| 7. | 04/09/02 | Quick Response PT Workgroup finalize proposed language (Mudambi) | In Progress |
| 8. | 04/09/02 | Acceptance Criteria Subcommittee Meeting (Haynes) | 05/14/02 |
| 9. | 04/09/02 | Draft recommendation to AAs re Parker Comment (Burmeister) | In Progress |
| 10. | 03/26/02 | Report on Radiochemistry FOT Subcommittee (Griggs) | 04/23/02 |

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
PROFICIENCY TESTING COMMITTEE MEETING
APRIL 23, 2002**

| Name | Affiliation | Address |
|--|---|--|
| Barbara Burmeister, Chair | Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene | T: (608) 265-1100 F: (608) 265-1114 E: burmie@mail.slh.wisc.edu |
| John Griggs (Absent) | USEPA/OAR | T: (334) 270-3450 F: (334) 270-3454 E: griggs.john@epa.gov |
| RaeAnn Haynes | State of Oregon DEQ | T: (503) 229-5983 F: (503) 229-6924 E: haynes.raeann@deq.state.or.us |
| Larry Jackson | Environmental Quality Management | T: (603) 924-6852 F: (603) 924-6346 E: lpjackson@msn.com |
| Tom McAninch (Absent) | Eastman Chemical Company | T: (903) 237-5473 F: (903) 237-6395 E: twmcan@eastman.com |
| Michael Miller (Absent) | NJ DEP - Lab Certification Office of QA | T: (609) 633-2804 F: (609) 777-1774 E: mmiller1@dep.state.nj.us |
| Anand Mudambi | US Army Corps of Engineers | T: (703) 603-8796 F: (703) 603-9112 E: mudambi.anand@epa.gov |
| Ralph Obenauf | SPEX CertiPrep, Inc. | T: (732) 549-7144 F: (732) 603-9647 E: robenauf@spexcsp.com |
| Marykay Steinman (Absent) | M.J. Reider Associates, Inc. | T: (610) 374-5129 F: (610) 374-7234 E: msteinman@mjureider.com |
| Erin Scheffler (Contractor support) | Anteon Corporation | T: (303) 895-1110 F: (303) 816-4183 E: escheffler@anteon.com |